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Elisa Gramer
Civ. Pers.

DECISION



**THE COMPTROLLER GENERAL
OF THE UNITED STATES
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20548**

FILE: 3-187020

DATE: January 24, 1977

**MATTER OF: Paul C. Salute - Transportation of Household
Effects**

DIGEST: Although travel orders allowed air shipment of unaccompanied baggage up to 250 pounds and surface transportation of household goods up to 5,000 pounds from Seattle to Bangkok incident to transfer of official station, employee of Drug Enforcement Agency reshipped 1,010 pounds of personal effects from Alexandria, Virginia, and 80 pounds from Seattle. Employee is entitled to actual transportation costs not to exceed cost for 250 pounds airshipped from Seattle and 840 pounds by surface transportation from Seattle. He must reimburse Government for any excess transportation costs. See authorities cited.

By letter dated July 6, 1976, Mr. Edwin J. Fost, Office of Controller, Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), Department of Justice, requests our decision concerning the liability of Mr. Paul C. Salute, a DEA employee, for excess transportation costs resulting from air shipment of personal effects in two lots from his temporary duty station in Alexandria, Virginia, and Seattle, Washington, his old official station, to his new permanent duty station in Bangkok, Thailand.

Department of Justice travel orders dated June 25, 1975, authorized Mr. Salute's transfer of official station from Seattle to Bangkok. These orders allowed air shipment of unaccompanied baggage up to 250 pounds, gross weight, and surface transportation of household goods and personal effects up to 5,000 pounds, net weight. Mr. Salute made no shipment of household goods or personal effects by surface transportation.

Mr. Salute shipped 80 pounds of unaccompanied baggage by air freight from Seattle to Bangkok and has submitted a claim for the cost of this shipment, \$110.40. Additionally, 1,010 pounds of unaccompanied baggage were shipped air freight on Government Bill of Lading from Alexandria to Bangkok at a total cost of \$1,411.95.

In sum, the greater portion of Mr. Salute's personal effects were shipped to his overseas station from a place other

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than that specified in his orders and by means other than those authorized therein, resulting in excess transportation costs. We have been asked to determine the extent of Mr. Salute's liability for these excess costs.

Paragraph 2-8.2d of the Federal Travel Regulations (FTR) (FTMR 101-7) (May 1973) allows Government payment for the transportation of a transferred employee's household goods whether the shipment originates at the employee's last official station or some other point. The total amount that may be paid, however, may not exceed the cost of transporting the property in one lot by the most economical route from the last official station of the transferring employee to his new official station. See B-167962, June 27, 1969.

Paragraph 2-8.4a(1) of the FTR states:

"Means other than selected. An employee may elect to have his household goods moved by some means other than the means selected by the Government * * * on the condition that he will pay the amount, if any, by which the charges for the means of transportation selected by him exceed the charges for the means of transportation selected by the Government."

Accordingly, Mr. Salute is entitled to the actual transportation expenses incurred not to exceed the cost of transporting 840 pounds of personal effects from Seattle to Bangkok by surface transportation and 250 pounds of personal effects by air freight from Seattle to Bangkok. Both of these amounts are to be determined under the actual cost method. FTR para. 2-8.4c(1) (May 1973). Mr. Salute must pay the Government for any transportation costs for shipment of the personal effects exceeding the amount of such allowable transportation cost.

The fact that Mr. Salute may not have desired air freight shipment does not relieve him of responsibility to the Government for the excess. We have held that an employee remains liable for such excess shipping costs regardless of the reasons for the excess. B-174755, January 18, 1972. For example, an

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employee was held responsible for excess shipping charges even though the carrier shipped more household goods than authorized by the employee. B-118052, April 23, 1954.

Action should be taken by the agency in accordance with this decision.

Deputy

R. J. K. 1/2
Comptroller General
of the United States